

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 21, 1973

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER *HK*

SUBJECT: Emergency Disaster Relief for Sahel Africa

On June 20 you appointed Maurice J. Williams, Deputy Administrator for the Agency of International Development, as Special Coordinator for American Assistance to the West African Drought Disaster. Williams has submitted a progress report to you with an indication of his future plans (Tab A). The salient points in the report are these:

- Mass famine has been averted. A \$125 million relief effort is under way which includes a \$42 million US commitment. Six hundred and twenty-five thousand tons of food have been committed, of which the US is providing 256 thousand tons, or about 40 percent.
- Transportation and distribution to remote areas of the Sahel will be a major problem during the immediate days ahead. Williams has sent a transport team to the Sahel for an on-the-spot assessment.
- It is anticipated that emergency food relief will be needed for the next 12 to 15 months, even with good rains. In an attempt to assess these needs, we will conduct, in September, a field assessment of the crop outlook for 1974 in cooperation with the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).
- Looking beyond the immediate emergency needs, the US is working closely with the drought-afflicted countries, other donors, and the UN to plan for the region's recovery. Agreed guidelines stress three points. There is the absolute importance that the African countries take the initiative. Ongoing development activities and plans need to be redirected in recognition of changing priorities. There will be need for additional assistance from donor countries and agencies.
- Williams has been invited to meet in September in Ouagadougou, Upper Volta, with the Chiefs of State of the Sahel countries to coordinate plans for the recovery.

DECLASSIFIED

PA/HO Department of State

E.O. 12958, as amended

May 4, 2006

NOTIFY

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Authority E.O. 12958

By JNARA Date 10-21-02

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

- The Foreign Assistance Act pending in both Houses has been amended to provide a special authorization of \$30 million for rehabilitation in the Sahel.
- International cooperation in the relief effort has been encouraging. In addition to the United States, important donors are France, Canada, Germany, Nigeria, the European Economic Community, and the United Nations.
- Many black, or predominantly black, groups are stepping up their activities in support of drought relief efforts, as are other private institutions such as The Catholic Relief Services and The American Friends Service Committee.

Attachment

Tab A - Progress Report to the President from Maurice Williams
on the African drought relief effort, August 10.